

NEWS

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 13, 2014

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County wins record-breaking 31 national awards

SAN BERNARDINO – The County of San Bernardino County this week surpassed its own record, winning 31 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties for its innovative programs and services, including top honors for the Countywide Vision as well as the State of the County event, which promotes the Vision.

Last year, the County won 18 NACo awards and has won an average of 14 NACo awards annually for the past 10 years. The most awards the County received from NACo were 27 in 2011. The NACo Achievement Awards Program recognizes innovative county government programs in the areas of children and youth, criminal justice, county administration, environmental protection, information technology, and health.

This year, San Bernardino County led the region with more awards than the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and Ventura. Only 29 of California's 58 counties received top awards.

The Countywide Vision won a 2014 Achievement Award in the category of County Administration and Management. The Board of Supervisors formed a partnership with the San Bernardino Association of Governments and launched the Countywide Vision in 2010 after receiving public input and feedback from experts on improving the county and moving it forward. The Countywide Vision is an active, ongoing, collaborative process aimed at setting a course of the county as a whole, improving life within the county and making the county attractive to investors.

"San Bernardino County consistently earns these accolades because we encourage our employees to share their ideas on how to improve services and find efficiencies so we can better serve our residents and businesses," Board of Supervisors Chair Janice Rutherford said.

The Board of Supervisors will recognize and honor the people and departments responsible for the 2014 winning programs and services at an upcoming public meeting.

The following are San Bernardino County's 2014 winning programs:

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Countywide Vision - County Administration Management

The Countywide Vision is being accomplished by strengthening each of the elements of a “complete community” (education, economy, wellness, public safety, housing, water, environment, infrastructure, image, and quality of life), with the understanding that the elements are interrelated and depend on each other’s success. The Countywide Vision has also led to the establishment and active pursuit of two regional goals, each requiring the cooperation of several element groups. One regional goal calls for supporting the success of every child from cradle to career. This is being addressed collaboratively by the education, wellness, economy, public safety, and housing, element groups. The other calls for the establishment of the county as a model for business friendliness. This is being achieved collaboratively by the economy, education, wellness, public safety, housing, and water element groups.

The State of the County - Community/Economic Development

Faced with complex issues during the economic downturn, the County had to work collaboratively and across boundaries in order to be successful in its efforts to sustain a high quality of life for its residents and businesses. The County placed a call to action for stakeholders interested in creating a vision for the future. This call to action resulted in the creation of a Countywide Vision – a roadmap for the future. Based on the information from meetings and surveys, the County made a significant change to the “State of the County” program to better promote intergovernmental cooperation and enhance citizen and business engagement. The program now promotes the goals to create a “complete county,” a county in which those who reside and invest can prosper and achieve well-being. Focusing on economic growth; enhancing the quality of life for residents; job creation; and promoting the county as a prime Southern California place for business; the program presents reportable, measurable outcomes each year.

Rope Fog: Enhancing Unified Multi-Agency Response Coordination - Emergency Management and Response

The San Bernardino County Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services, developed the Responders Organized for Pass Emergencies (ROPE) Field Operations Guide (FOG) for federal, state, county, municipal, and private sector emergency response organizations responding to daily incidents; or those organizations that are responsible for restoring critical utility and transportation infrastructure in the Cajon Pass/Interstate 15 corridor. OES and the all-inclusive ROPE Committee engaged in an unprecedented two-year planning project that led to the development of the ROPE FOG for day-to-day response in the Cajon Pass, as well as for a catastrophic regional event, requiring coordinated and unified multi-agency response.

Re-Entry Support Program - Employment and Training

The Re-Entry Support Program is a collaborative effort between the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and the Fontana Police Department’s Re-entry Support Team. The Fontana Re-entry Support Team (FRST) was created to assist early-release prisoners and probationers with successful re-assimilation into society. Nationally the rate at which this population re-offends and goes back into prison has been a staggering 75% or more. The FRST team conducted an assessment and found that the biggest issue for this population was lack of employment. FRST reached out to the WIB to provide the employment services, job coaching, job search assistance and reconnection to the workforce that participants needed. Since September 2012, FRST and the WIB have provided 256 individuals with valuable resources. The program has placed over 106 clients in employment.

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ICEMA Health Information Network – Health

Emergency Medical Services play an important role in the healthcare of the community by providing an emergency safety net that extends to the acutely ill and injured who are otherwise unable to reach medical care on their own. Of the almost one million emergency patient visits that occur each year at emergency departments in the county, approximately 25 percent are assisted through the services provided by EMS. The Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency (ICEMA) Health Information Network was created to collect and share information between healthcare agencies and organizations. The purpose of the network was to provide a centralized access and collection point for the accumulation of pre-hospital and specialty care documentation, ensure data consistency and interoperability between providers and analyze and improve pre-hospital care provided in the county.

Housing Authority and Workforce Investment Board Partnership - Employment and Training

During the first quarter of 2013, The Workforce Investment Board entered into an agreement with the County's Housing Authority to provide employment and educational services to families eligible under the housing assistance program. The program has served a total of 123 low income residents. These individuals receive career counseling, employment services workshops, job referrals and job skills enhancement services. The overall program goals are to assist eligible individuals with finding and retaining work, improving skills, becoming self-sufficient, and contributing to the economic stability of the county.

PC 368.1 Law Enforcement Card and Training Program - Human Services

The Department of Aging and Adult Services created an enhanced Penal Code 368.1 Law Enforcement Information Card with an associated training program for law enforcement officers. The Law Enforcement Information Card is an attractive pocket-sized, two-sided, accordion-style card that provides officers with penal codes applicable to elder and dependent adult abuse, enabling them to file proper charges against alleged perpetrators. Social workers provide the informational card and training directly to local law enforcement at law enforcement departmental meetings. Through the use of the Law Enforcement Information Card and associated training, there has been increased participation in elder and dependent adult abuse investigations by local law enforcement agencies and improved relationships between social workers and law enforcement.

Policy Review Program - Human Services

The Transitional Assistance Department and Performance, Education & Resource Centers designed the Policy Review Program as a new approach for creating and presenting training using workgroup developed materials and an e-Learning network. Training of staff administering federal and state programs in a cost-effective and efficient manner is critical to the success of the County meeting its goals to serve the public and maintain performance and quality outcomes. Challenges include frequently changing regulations, business process changes, and a large and geographically dispersed workforce. This approach promotes a consistent, interactive, adaptable and readily available learning environment.

Lobby Management - Human Services

The Transitional Assistance Department Lobby Management initiative was implemented to improve customer service and maximize efficiency and productivity in response to increasing lobby traffic. Under Lobby Management, an eligibility worker customers the option to drop off documents, check in for appointments, or request supportive services at a self-service kiosk. This allows customers to be checked in timely and have a seat while waiting, rather than standing in a long reception line.

Annual Fatherhood Breakfast Event - Human Services

Recognizing the importance of a father's role in a child's life, Children and Family Services hosts an annual Fatherhood Breakfast event as a strategy to promote and enhance the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children. This event, held each June since 2012, is an opportunity to recognize fathers who receive services from CFS. It is the first program of its kind in the county, bringing together male caregivers and biological fathers. The event is a one-stop shop for resources, services and camaraderie offered to help the men further understand their value and their role in children's lives and in the greater social context of building stable families. Role models include male social workers as well as male parent partners who have successfully reunified with their children.

CFS View - Human Services

The Children and Family Services View is a communication channel to provide department updates, provide information regarding upcoming activities and discuss accomplishments and hot topics. CFS View occurs the first Monday of every month. Members of staff are able to watch a live feed of the presentation from their regional offices. When CFS View was implemented in May 2012, the primary focus of the presentation was to provide CFS staff with updates regarding the CFS Business Redesign initiatives being implemented to improve operations. Over time, it has evolved to include information such as the department's efforts to realize its mission and the Countywide Vision. In addition, information on new program developments and staffing updates is provided. CFS View helps to convey important information directly to staff in a timely and consistent manner.

Transportation Reimbursement Escort Program - Human Services

The Transportation Reimbursement Escort Program is an effective partnership between the Department of Aging and Adult Services and Valley Transportation Services beginning in January 2013. VTrans is a non-profit organization based in Upland that administers the TREP program to the San Bernardino Mountains, Victor Valley, North Desert, and Morongo Basin area. The focus of the program is to allow qualified seniors and persons with disabilities to hire their own volunteer drivers to provide necessary escort transportation when they are unable to drive and use other forms of transportation. The participant-hired drivers are paid directly by the participant with funds they receive through this program. TREP provides access to necessary medical care and travel to other life-enriching activities.

Crisis Case Management through Kinship Care - Children and Youth

Children and Family Services collaborates with two community agencies to provide three kinship support services centers in the county for individuals raising children of an extended family member. In 2011, CFS expanded the services provided to kinship families by allocating funding for a full-time crisis case manager position at each of the kinship support services centers. The crisis case manager provides a personalized and immediate response to the kinship family's emergency needs by using the available internal kinship center and external community resources; thereby avoiding the necessity of formal intervention.

The immediate response by a dedicated crisis case manager, allows the family to stabilize more quickly than it would have been able to do without assistance. As a result, there is a reduction of children entering the foster care system thus saving program costs, reducing disruption of family life and increasing the access of caregivers to resources.

San Bernardino County Probation Day Reporting and Reentry Services Centers - Criminal Justice and Public Safety

The Probation Department established Day Reporting and Reentry Services Centers for adults in three geographical areas: Central Valley, West Valley, and High Desert. The sites provide a one-stop resource that co-locates key county service providers and provides linkage to community and faith based organizations to afford a broad range of educational, social development, and rehabilitative services. The primary partners located at each site include the Department of Behavioral Health, Probation Department, Department of Public Health, Transitional Assistance Department and Workforce Development Department, allowing clients immediate access to these providers to address their most immediate needs and to develop plans to facilitate services.

Kiosks as a Public Service Tool - Human Services

The Department of Child Support Services has implemented six self-service kiosks in the public reception areas of each of its three offices, as well as its office located at the local child support court. These kiosks offer customers the opportunity to open a case, access information about the status of their case, make a payment toward their child support obligation, or obtain answers to questions they may have about the program. Customers may also access information about community services which assist in addressing other non-child support issues they may be experiencing. The six kiosks were installed in September 2012. During 2013, 4,461 customers spent over 265 hours using the department's kiosks.

Child Support Regional Legal/Operations Training - Human Services

In 2012 the County's Department of Child Support Services, in collaboration with Orange and San Diego Counties, developed regional child support training for legal and operational staff which has continued quarterly since its inception. The regional training concept offered opportunities to train a larger number of staff in San Bernardino and Orange County. The partnership amongst the three primary counties has proven to be a successful formula. By combining efforts, each of the three agencies was able to gain efficiencies that would not have been realized by any one of the counties working alone. To date, seven training sessions have been held (four in San Bernardino and three in Orange County) and approximately 350 child support professionals have been trained on various topics at the local level.

One Call Marsy's Law Notification System - Criminal Justice and Public Safety

The District Attorney's Office saw the need for every victim of crime to be notified of their rights under Marsy's Law and the various services available to them. In 2013, we implemented "One Call Marsy's Law Notification System" to contact every victim in every criminal case filed in the county. We contracted with One Call Now, the country's largest message notification provider which has the ability to quickly and easily send messages.

By implementing this program we have not only been able to reach out to even more victims regarding their rights, we have also been able to assist them with compensation through the California Victim Compensation Program, obtaining restitution for out-of-pocket expenses and explaining the criminal justice process and providing updates on their case.

Loma Linda University Medical Center Psychiatry Resident Rotation Program - Employment and Training

A shortage of psychiatrists in the county was identified during a behavioral health workforce needs assessment. Competition from state hospitals and other medical groups who paid more made hiring new psychiatrists a challenge because they did not gain exposure to community mental health during their residency program. In 2013, the Loma Linda University Medical Center Psychiatry Resident Rotation Program was created. In partnership with Loma Linda University Medical Center, the Department of Behavioral Health hosts a fourth-year Psychiatry Resident. While at DBH the resident reports to three attending physicians and their programs, including two community outpatient clinics and one specialty forensics program. The medical director spends the first day with the resident to discuss the importance of community mental health. The success of the program is evident in that DBH has already hired three residents, or 50% of the residents that have completed the program to date, to work as psychiatrists in DBH clinics. They will begin in June 2014 upon graduation.

JobsInSoCal.com - Employment and Training

JobsInSoCal.com is an online niche job board launched in September 2013 and sponsored by the Southern Counties Regional Partnership. The purpose of the job board is to provide a resourceful, user friendly and informative job board to increase the interest and workforce within Behavioral Health, Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Mental Health Services. Job seekers are able to search for positions in Imperial, Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tri-Cities, and Ventura, and their contract agencies. Job seekers are also able to post current resumes for potential employers to review. Job seekers can view videos to learn more about jobs to help strengthen their job seeking skills. Employers are able to enter job openings and are able to indicate if lived experience is a requirement for the position. On average there are 100 job postings listed daily. To date, over 400 jobs have been posted to JobsInSoCal.com.

Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) – Family Resource Center - Human Services

The Family Resource Center (FRC) program consists of multiple “one-stop” centers that address diverse community needs in a culturally and linguistically competent manner. FRC services include: prevention and leadership programs; mental health education workshops; community counseling; adult skills-based education; after school youth projects; and parenting/caregiver support and education. These services are delivered to children, youth, adults and older adults in non-clinical natural settings that are culturally-specific to the needs of the respective community. Services are also deployed within communities in efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness, and to increase the likelihood of service utilization amongst populations that have historically had limited access.

Screening Assessment and Referral Center (SARC) - Human Services

The Department of Behavioral Health Screening Assessment and Referral Center (SARC) serves as a uniform point of assessment, referral and linkage to substance abuse treatment within the county. Previously, individuals seeking treatment services relied upon community-based organizations, web-based, phone, or third-party systems to receive referrals to agency providers.

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The SARC fills a gap in the availability of existing services by serving as a uniform access point for referrals and linkages to appropriate and lowest level of care needed for those meeting criteria for SUD treatment services. SARC enhances the level of citizen participation in government programs by providing education on available treatment options, linkage to resources and brief case management to minimize barriers to accessibility. Proven measureable results include improving intergovernmental cooperation by partnering with the Department of Children and Family Services to address needs of clients receiving multilayered county services.

The STAY (Youth Hostel) - Human Services

The STAY (Serving Transitional Age Youth) is an innovative program designed to address the needs of diverse Transitional Age Youth (TAY, age 18 to 25) population who are experiencing an acute psychiatric episode or crisis and are in need of a higher level of care than board and care residential, but a lower level of care than psychiatric hospitalization. The STAY is a short term, 14-bed crisis residential treatment center that provides up to a 30-day stay for TAY with or without Medi-cal. The facility is the only center of its kind in the state, funded by Proposition 63. The STAY is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for voluntary admissions. Valley Star Children and Family Services, Inc. is the contracted agency that provides program services, serving 83 youth to date.

MAGNOLIA AT 9TH—SENIOR APARTMENTS HOUSING PROJECT - Community/Economic Development

The Magnolia at 9th Senior Apartment Housing Project is a collaborative permanent supportive housing project with a developer, Meta Housing Corporation, Western Community Housing Inc., Lugo Senior Apartments, L.P., the Department of Behavioral Health, and DBH's Full Service Partnership Age-Wise Supportive Services. The Board of Supervisors approved a collaboration to implement permanent supportive housing for individuals with serious mental illness who are homeless or at significant risk of becoming homeless. The Magnolia at 9th Senior Apartments Housing Project is an affordable senior housing development containing 119 one- and two- bedroom units. The developer has allowed 10 of the one-bedroom units for occupancy by eligible older adults. The remainder of the units will be affordable to low and very low income senior tenants 62 years and older.

Automated Referral Tracking System (ARTS) - Information Technology

The Automated Referral Tracking System (ARTS) is a web-based application designed to assist doctors, nurses and supporting medical staff to efficiently track and manage referrals on a daily basis. Its main objective is to automate the cumbersome referral process and provide an overall improvement in the efficiency and collaboration between primary care physicians, specialty clinics and patients. As a result, patients were able to receive the quality care they need in a timely manner so they can get back to their normal healthy lives, providing positive impact and contribution to their families, employment, businesses and the entire community as a whole.

Automated Incident Reporting Module - Information Technology

San Bernardino County Probation documents an average of 2,800 incidents reports in its Juvenile Detention and Assessment Centers each year. The current manual process is time consuming and labor intensive. The department has utilized a team of staff to develop an electronic module within its main case management system to complete this process which is estimated to reduce the time staff takes to complete documentation by two thirds. This will allow staff to engage youthful offenders in additional targeted programming and services improve outcomes.

SHOC: AN ALL-INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO MASS CARE - Emergency Management and Response

The Office of Emergency Services developed an innovative approach to mass care and sheltering – the Shelter Operations Compound. SHOC combines the typical shelter comforts provided by the Red Cross with value-added services for clients/evacuees from local government. The SHOC is a multi-discipline operation involving more than 24 County Departments and several affiliated volunteer organizations. A SHOC site is designed to support 3,500-5,000 clients, and it is anticipated that the County could facilitate three SHOC compounds simultaneously. In June 2012, a tabletop exercise was held to introduce the SHOC to County employees followed by a functional exercise in June 2013.

Library Set Programs: Organization and Streamlining – Libraries

The County Library's Set Programs are designed to enhance learning and development at any age. By structuring our programs to target specific age groups such as Library Beginners (0-5 years old), Kids Zone (6-11 years old), Teens (12-18 years old) and Adults (18+ years old) we are able to provide a diverse range of programs that the community can enjoy. The purpose of organizing and streamlining the Set Programs offered by the Library was to ensure that quality programs are offered at all of our 32 branches. Through this mass organization we have seen an increase in program attendance, variety and quality of programs offered, and better marketing of Set Programs. In addition we began offering regular training to staff which increased morale and administrative support by way of budget which allowed us to provide kits and materials to run the programs successfully.

457(b) Deferral Education Campaign, Featuring a New Roth Option - Personnel Management/ Employee Training & Benefits

As part of the County's commitment to assist employees in preparing for a secure retirement, the County took advantage of the changes to the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 and added to its 457(b) Deferred Compensation plan offerings the Roth deferral option. Adding this option to the portfolio provided employees with an increased flexibility to meet a myriad of financial needs. Beginning in July of 2013, the County developed an intensive educational/promotional campaign to introduce and educate employees regarding the Roth feature and to increase overall retirement savings awareness. The Roth campaign theme was implemented as "The Wonderful Wizard of Retirement Savings." The Campaign resulted communication to approximately 18,000 employees via email blasts, meeting face-to-face with approximately 600 employees, new enrollments and existing enrollments utilizing only Roth deferrals or Roth and Traditional deferrals resulting in an estimated annual increase of \$637,000 to the 457(b) Deferred Compensation plan.

Building Automation System (BAS) Control Integration -Environmental Protection and Energy

In 2012-2013, the Building Automation System Control Integration Project moved the County from an antiquated model to a robust technology-rich model. The Building Automation System Control Integration Project leveraged technologies to monitor system performance and device failures, provide system alarms via email, save energy, and maintain building temperatures at a comfortable and consistent level during abnormal weather events. The goal was to provide a model that had a standard topology, shorten the time it took to respond to modify building temperatures and schedules, save energy, and provide a greater return on dollars spent for energy, payroll and travel to buildings.

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West Nile Virus Surveillance Collaboration – Health

The West Nile Virus Surveillance Collaboration is a joint venture between Environmental Health's Mosquito Vector Control Program and the Aviation Division of the Sheriff's Department.

The program utilizes aerial surveillance to identify and reduce mosquito breeding by targeting unmaintained swimming pools in residential neighborhoods. Addresses of green pools identified during surveillance were given to mosquito vector control to track down the owner responsible for maintaining the pools to reduce mosquito breeding. It is estimated that the Mosquito Vector Control Program potentially prevented the production of 990 million mosquitos per week, greatly reducing the potential prevalence of West Nile Virus.

Improving Food Safety Through the Health Education Liaison Program (HELP) – Health

The Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health Services implemented a Health Education Liaison Program (HELP) that promotes effective strategies to improve inspection scores, raise food safety standards, and strengthen operator's managerial control measures to meet long-term compliance objectives. Many food service facilities face reoccurring critical violations increasing the risk of foodborne illness outbreaks and resulting in low scores, which can have a negative financial impact on businesses. Low scoring facilities is referred to HELP by district inspectors. The HELP consultation is performed at no cost to the facility and has assisted participating food facilities in achieving a 10% reduction in critical violations. An example of the effectiveness of this program is represented by a facility that went from a score of 73 (C grade) before the HELP consultation, and increased to a score of 90 (A grade) on their next unannounced routine inspection five months later.